

A

STATEMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCES

CONNECTED WITH THE

PROPOSAL OF RESOLUTIONS

AT A

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

BRISTOL CHURCH UNION,

OCTOBER 1, 1850.

BY

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A

STATEMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCES,

&c.

GAL. ii. 5.

“ To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour ; that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.”

SINCE 1843, when, with the sanction and concurrence of many faithful members of the Church, I endeavoured to discriminate between Catholic truth as maintained by the Church of England, and the Romanizing errors of some misguided men, who had attempted to introduce within the communion of the Church doctrines and practices against which she protests, seven years, replete with interest and anxiety to all Churchmen, have passed away. In connexion with the efforts made in 1843, will be remembered the cessation of the *British Critic*, a journal which had unhappily become notorious for its Romanism, and for its attacks upon the Church of England; the

“Reply” of Mr. Ward in his “Ideal of a Christian Church;” and the consequent events, ending in his censure by authority, and secession from the Church of England; the open avowal of Romish sentiments by Mr. Oakley, which resulted in his censure, and separation from the Church; and, in fine, the publication of Mr. Newman’s Work on “Development” in 1845, contemporaneously with his lapse to Romanism.

The separation of the leaders of the Romanizing party from the Church, with several of their followers, had the effect of diminishing, for a time, the controversies which had been excited by their proceedings for several years previously, and which had strongly excited the popular mind. It seemed to be felt that the great danger of an unchecked inculcation of tenets hostile to the English Church, within her own Communion, was now at an end; and that any unfaithful members who remained, being deprived of their leaders, need be no longer objects of fear. Wearied with the controversies of ten years, the public mind gladly turned to other subjects, and the journals ceased to find their most inviting, and most remunerative topics in denunciations of “Puseyism.”

One effect of this disruption of the bonds which had so long gathered many around certain leaders, soon became visible. There were minds which, deprived of their support, relinquished the very principle of faith, and eagerly adopted the speculations of German Rationalism, or the most recent forms of Infidelity. Principles of Latitudinarianism, long held in check by a system which, for a time, held up the contrary principle of dogmatism, and which at length sank through its own inconsistencies in adopting the Infidelities against which it had originally protested, came forth again upon the stage; and politicians, liberal divines, and the fashionable world, eagerly

hailed the Arnold and Bunsen liberalism, which made short work with creeds, and articles of faith, and all the lumber of positive Christianity, and all those inconvenient ties on intellectual speculation and moral action, which the Church of England in her Creeds, and her teaching, so pertinaciously maintains. Hence the multiplication of insidious and crafty attacks upon the faith of Churchmen, in the shape of translations from the German, filled with a sentimental Infidelity :—mockeries of the principle of belief in the inspiration of the Bible, as a mere “Bibliolatry ;” recommendations of German Rationalism by those who did not venture to avow their own ; publications of direct and gross Infidelity, not inferior to the blasphemies of Bolingbroke, or of Tindal, of Chubb, or of Tom Paine. Hence the rise of an openly Latitudinarian and Germanizing school of men within the Church : a school regarded with the highest favour by the State, possessing its confidence, and intended apparently, ere long, to be employed in the highest stations of the Church, for the express purpose of “liberalizing” her tenets, and throwing the door open to Unitarians and Rationalists, to unite in her Communion, and to develop their Infidelity from her pulpits.

But there were other consequences following from the disruption of the bonds between certain seceders and their immediate followers. To those who had witnessed the immense personal influence exercised by *one*, at least, of those who had left the Church—an influence which seemed absolutely to enchain the faculties of hundreds of intelligent men—it was a matter of amazement, that so few persons, after all, followed the example of one to whom they had looked up with an almost idolatrous veneration. Yet so it was. Many persons who had learnt from their unhappy teachers, to hold the whole cycle of Roman

doctrine, and to practise many of the peculiar devotions of another Church within the communion of their own, remained ; but they were without a leader. In that crisis, it will be remembered, that they were not long without leaders. One, at least, whose virtues and learning are universally acknowledged, but whom it is needless for me to name, published at that time in the religious journals several letters, which placed him in the position left unoccupied by those who had seceded ; and, on that occasion, openly expressed sentiments in reference to the secessions which had just occurred, which appeared to me at the time to indicate an alteration in his own views and position on the subject of Romanism. Most leniently was the fault of separating from the Church of England now spoken of. In fact, if I remember aright, such secession was alluded to as merely a change to another sphere of labour in the Lord's vineyard ; and the act itself was supposed to have occurred through the Providence of God, in answer to the prayers which had been put up in the Church of Rome for the conversion of England. This was, to say the least, rather a weak ground to take, in speaking of the lapsed. Yet as every one was aware of the great exertions made at the same time to retain persons in the communion of the English Church, it seemed that the tone adopted in regard to Rome in those letters was intended rather for the purpose of staying unsettled minds for a time, and gaining their confidence, than for any other purpose. I refer with very great reluctance to these proceedings of individuals. Under ordinary circumstances it would be very unjustifiable to do so ; but there are men whose acts are not those of ordinary persons—whose slightest word, or most transient action, is a *law* to thousands. Every sentiment and act of men thus influential, is, in fact, a public act, fraught with consequences to the

Church. I must therefore be pardoned for alluding to such particulars.

There can be no doubt of the purity of motive which led to those earnest and successful exertions to retain unstable souls in the communion of the Church. Nor should we criticize too strictly the mode in which, under the circumstances of the case, this was effected. But there has been cause for regret in what we have subsequently observed. Translations from Roman Catholic books of devotion may not have been advisable: still some concession to weak minds may have been allowable. But it might have been hoped, that, after a little, a skilful physician would have endeavoured to have applied more than mere palliatives to the disease; that he would have endeavoured to remove the disease itself; and at length have applied even the knife, if needful, to effect a real cure. Alas! I fear that course has not been taken. We have heard much of indulgence to prejudices in the direction of Rome; but we have never heard of dissuasives from Romish error. It would seem that, judging by the results which have appeared from time to time, there has been little if any alteration in the tone of mind which had been fostered by the teaching of those unfaithful men who have left us. On the contrary, it would appear, that further developments in the wrong direction have taken place. Circumstances have now and then occurred, which proved that there was, in various directions, a systematic indulgence for Romanizing views. Even Clergy—a few of the younger Clergy—might be heard, in certain societies, broaching the most dangerous doctrines, subversive of the position of the English Church; and the length of time during which this was tolerated, when it could not be unknown; and the successive lapse of Clergy from the same localities, gave rise to apprehensions, that little care was exercised, either to inculcate the pure principles of the English

Church, or to guard the flock against false teachers. There was evident reason to fear, that in some directions—chiefly in those where the taint of Romanism had been derived from those who had left us in 1844 and 1845,—the disease was still spreading, and gathering in its victims. Unhappily its continued existence is too palpable. We all know that, from time to time, persons of intelligence and of station have seceded to Rome; and when any crisis of affairs like that which has recently occurred, takes place, it is found that there are many, whose convictions are so undermined and so feeble, that they are unable to stand the slightest shock or difficulty. The effect of the whole has been, that the impression of the public mind in reference to the tendency of certain doctrines, has been *continually strengthened*.

What has been stated will suffice to remind the reader of the existence of a Romanizing influence even at present, and of its connexion with another influence which is not itself Romanizing in intention, but which indulges others in virtual Romanism, lest they should forsake the communion of the Church of England.

In 1847, the controversy on the subject of the Bishopric of Hereford discovered to the Church of England the position in which she is now placed by law, in reference to the appointment of her higher functionaries. That controversy established the fact, that a minister, who may be himself a Dissenter, or subject to Dissenting or Roman influences, has the *absolute power* of appointing whomsoever he pleases to the Episcopal office, no matter if he be a Rationalist, a Heretic, a Dissenter, or a man of grossly immoral habits. The effect of this new interpretation of the law by political judges, was to silence at once all demand for an increase in the Episcopate. Men who had been most anxious to see the Episcopal system made more efficient by an augmentation in its numbers, felt that,

under such circumstances, it mattered little, whether the Episcopate was more or less numerous. Having been always myself a most anxious advocate for the increase of the Episcopate, I was compelled to relinquish any further support of that measure, in consequence of the general disgust and indignation which was felt at the position in which we were found to be placed by law. How far any man of faith, who is guided by the dictates of conscience, and with a single eye to his duty to God, can, under existing circumstances, take any part in supporting the present state of the law in Ecclesiastical appointments, and in coercing the consciences of the Bishops and Clergy by threats of *præmunire*, is a serious question.

The events of the last and present year, as bearing on the Baptismal controversy, are so familiar to us all, that I need say nothing more than offer a passing tribute of admiration to that Christian fortitude, which, in the cause of Truth, has borne up an illustrious prelate in unshaken firmness and dignity, in serenity of spirit, patience, and unwearied labours.

It was in the course of this great controversy that the "Church Union" movement, which had been called into existence after the controversy relating to the Bishopric of Hereford, exerted itself with great energy, and received a most important modification in its general character. From being, as it had been originally intended, without party tendencies, and open to all Churchmen, it became restricted, by the course of circumstances, to one portion of the Church; and it acquired, at the same time, a direction towards the reform of the relations existing between the Church and the State, which it had not previously possessed, at least to the same extent. It was at the conclusion of the Gorham controversy, and in the effort to adapt the "Church Union" organization to its new position and destinies, that a meeting took place at Bristol, with a view

to enlist the Church Union of that district in the plan of co-operation proposed, and of which I am now about to speak more particularly.

On the effort then made I will only here remark, at the outset, that it was calculated, amongst other objects, to restore, as far as might be, the freedom from strong and decided *party* influences, which the founders of the Union movement most anxiously, and from a sense of its absolute necessity, sought to impress upon it at the very outset. The sequel will prove, I think, that the founders of the Church Union movement have been actuated throughout by consistent, and, I trust, by conscientious principles; not carelessly adopted, and therefore not lightly to be relinquished.

There has been so much misconception and misrepresentation of the real objects and purposes of the Resolutions proposed at a Special General Meeting of the Bristol Church Union on the 1st of October, that it seems due to the members of Church Unions generally, to explain, as clearly and succinctly as possible, the motives which induced myself and others to bring forward the proposal referred to; and constrain us to continue our advocacy of the policy therein indicated, notwithstanding the opposition which it has experienced.

The object of the Resolutions may be stated in a very few words.—They are intended for the purpose of securing for the Church Union movement generally, a “Church of England” character; of obviating the risk of its assuming a merely party tone; and of providing a central body on which some reliance may be placed, as regards its principles, its course of policy, and its independence.

It is admitted by most competent judges, that the Church Union movement is, in its present state, inadequate to make any such material impression on the public mind, as might lead to an alteration in those laws which,

from recent changes in the constitution, have become dangerous to the faith of the English Church. Before we can have any reasonable hope of attaining the securities we require for the appointment of Bishops who are sound in faith, for the restoration of our Synodical rights, and for the redress of our various grievances, we must obtain the aid and active co-operation of more than an insignificant body of the Laity. A certain number of High-Church Clergy, with a few lords and gentlemen, will not, without further aid, be sufficiently strong to carry our objects. A cause which is not, *to some extent*, popular, will not succeed in these days. It may be very natural that highly educated and intellectual men should attach but little value to the co-operation of classes which are not as competent as themselves to enter into the high moral and theological considerations involved in the claims of the Church. It may seem to them, that to act with any view to enlist the co-operation of the middle and the poorer classes, and, in general, of those classes which are but little conversant with theological questions, and liable to prejudices, and to hasty conclusions on unsound premisses, is merely to court a species of mob-popularity, and to follow in the footsteps of those political agitators whom they dislike, if they cannot despise them.

But the simple fact is, that *power* is vested in these classes by the Reform Bill. We are to a great extent subject to a Democracy; and our application for relief *must* be made to the People of England. If they do not to a certain extent aid us, and if, instead of aiding us, they *resist* us unanimously, our case is hopeless. I do not say that it is requisite for us to secure the co-operation of the *majority* of the people: we can attain our object, even if the majority are opposed to us: an active minority is always able in the end to carry its objects under a Demo-

cracy. But, then, there *must be a minority* at least. An appreciable portion of the people, a body not altogether despicable in numerical force, must be with us.

Now, then, if we seek to enlist in favour of their Church's cause any considerable portion of the Laity, we must consider the character and circumstances of those whom we have to address. They are, emphatically, men of common sense,—straightforward, frank, practical men,—men who dislike mysteries, concealments, underhand and indirect modes of proceeding, and subtleties; men who are always ready to sympathize with any effort made by any class for the attainment of liberty; and who dislike Dissent and Romanism, and are not favourable to innovations. I am here speaking of the general character of those classes of the Laity from whom alone any sympathy might be hoped for in any movement for the restoration of the Church's liberties. I am not speaking of mere "liberals" in religion, from whom little could be expected; but of the great mass of those who are sincerely attached to the Church of England.

There is another feature in this class, which cannot be overlooked at the present time. There is amongst them a very general distrust and dislike of what is popularly designated as "Puseyism" or "Tractarianism." There has been, for a series of years, a busy and active Press at work upon all the peculiarities of that religious system; and there can be no doubt of its unpopularity as a system among the mass of the higher, middling, and lower classes. I readily admit that some of the views popularly entertained on this subject are most incorrect and exaggerated; and that the imputation of "Puseyism" is not unfrequently extended to matters and points with which it has nothing to do; but still it is not to be denied, that the people have had considerable *reason* to feel distrust of a connexion

which, in point of fact, has furnished, and continues to furnish, to Romanism all its most valuable converts. The names of Newman, Oakley, Ward, Maskell, Wilberforce, and of others who have already seceded, with many of their followers, are continually before the public; and others are reputed to be preparing to follow their example. The Laity of the Church of England are fully aware of these facts; and they are not altogether unreasonably impressed with a *distrust* of what they generally call "Puseyism."

Such being undeniably the state of the public mind, the first inference I would draw is this,—that any movement for the defence of the Church's faith, or the restoration of her liberties, which is, or becomes associated *decidedly* in the mind of the people, with what they designate as "Puseyism," will be distrusted by them, and will not enlist their co-operation. If, for example, the well-known leaders of that party (I use the term in no invidious sense) or connexion, should be seen to be leaders of any such movement—if they should be put forward into the most prominent positions—should be placed, in the eyes of the world, at the head of the whole movement—if they should really and undeniably, by their personal influence, and through their followers, direct, influence, and virtually prescribe the policy, actions, language, and objects of such a movement,—then, the moment that this became known to the people, the whole movement would become an object of suspicion and of distrust. It may be very unfortunate that it should be so; and it may be easy to argue that the people are highly unreasonable, and extremely prejudiced and narrow-minded, and so forth, in taking this view; but nevertheless the *facts* are as I have stated them; and therefore, if what is popularly called "Puseyism" or "Tractarianism" appears before the world as the guiding principle in any Church movement, the leaders of that movement will have

to content themselves with the adhesion of a portion, and perhaps, a *diminishing* portion, of the High-Church Clergy, and of a few of the Laity of the higher classes.

I am now stating publicly what I have already repeatedly and ineffectually urged in private; and while I trust that I may stand acquitted of being influenced by personal feelings in reference to this subject, or of intending to express any opinion, that co-operation with those to whom reference has been made is not very desirable under certain conditions, I yet must most distinctly and decidedly add, that neither can I, consistently with a sense of duty to the Church, take any part in a mere "Tractarian" movement, nor do I believe that any such movement will be successful.

I have to apologize for the use of the term "Tractarian" here and elsewhere. It is merely employed to avoid circumlocution, and in the popular sense,—not as indicative of any want of respectful, friendly, or charitable feeling towards any class of men in the Church.

Having thus stated the first inference to be drawn from a survey of the state of the public mind, I now proceed to a second inference.

If it is desirable to enlist the aid of the people of England in behalf of any Church movement, that movement must be carried out in a mode which is suited to their feelings, dispositions, and even prejudices. Their character is a strongly marked one: they have their prejudices, and their suspicions; and if any set of men go to them without such practical consideration of their actual views and principles as they can honestly afford, they must expect no sympathy or aid. They may even find the very reverse of what they seek for.

In the first place, no *vague* and *undefined* policy in Church matters will commend itself to the practical and (at present) not unsuspicious minds of Englishmen. They

like to see their way before them, and to understand the questions on which they are expected to take a part. When they have fully considered those questions, they will either decline supporting our views, or they will decidedly and perseveringly go along with us; but they will certainly refuse to support any undefined course of policy in Church matters.

Nor can it be expected that they will co-operate in any proceedings in which entire frankness, and openness on *all points*, is not the rule invariably adopted. If there be any reserve or mystery—any shrinking from certain points, or any timidity or apparent sense of uneasiness in reference to them—suspicion will be engendered or confirmed. If, when men come forward to advocate the cause of the Church of England, and to seek securities for her faith, they are either very cautious and reserved as to their own unqualified adhesion to the faith and tenets of the Church; or else if they studiously avoid any censure of errors which their own Church has condemned;—if, while they are vehement, persevering, and earnest in their denunciation of one class of errors, they systematically observe silence with reference to another class of errors, to which the public mind is most keenly alive, and of which it is disposed to suspect them;—if it is their *system* to lie under such suspicions, and to take no steps to clear themselves from them, but, by their silence in reply to such accusations, to give them colour and force;—if this studied silence and reserve has been the characteristic which has usually marked the conduct of those who were preparing to leave the Church, for some time previously to their actual secession;—then I must candidly say, that not only will the people—the attached though unlearned Laity of the Church—look with distrust on any such movement, but they will have *reason* to do so.

On the other hand, let a frank, and open, and fearless

policy be adopted, and all suspicion and distrust will before long be at an end. Men may and will differ as to the expediency or propriety of this or that particular measure. They may be opposed, in many cases, to the whole movement, for various reasons. They may be of opinion that the State ought to have absolute power in all respects over the Church, even to the extent of changing her religion. They may be afraid of any alteration in the present laws affecting the Church. They may object to Synods as leading to division; and they may be anxious to preserve to the minister of the day his absolute and unlimited power of patronage. They may object to what we propose in various respects; they may think us imprudent, or theoretical, or even almost seditious; but they will be unable eventually to accuse us of dishonesty, or to excite popular feeling against us, if we are thoroughly and systematically honest, plain-spoken, and open—if we have no concealments, and do not hesitate to express our opinions and our intentions without reserve, whenever we are called on to do so. And assuredly, if we seek to lead on the members of the Church to the contest for their faith, we are bound to try to prove to them our own absolute loyalty to that cause. Men who have their principles to seek—men who are undecided between the Church of England and the Church of Rome—men who are not firmly convinced of the truth of that cause which they advocate—may and will hesitate, and shrink back when they are called on to profess their faith in the light of day; but it is not men like these who can or ought to lead Churchmen in the contest for their faith and liberties. Men who can one day be acting with us, and the next day go over to the Church of Rome; or even men who are afraid to speak the truth, and to support the language of their Church in reference to Romish error, lest some Romanizing sympathizer in some quarter should be offended; such

men will not be trusted to lead the Church's cause ; because they are unable to prove their entire, unqualified, unconditional, and absolute fidelity to the Church. But men who are unshaken in faith, and who are never withheld by any considerations from proclaiming the Truth as they have received it, will find no difficulty in proving, to the satisfaction of the world, what their principles really are. The adversary will be soon put to silence by those who boldly confess the Faith.

I now proceed to apply these principles to the Plan comprised in the Resolutions and Statement of Principles proposed at a Meeting of the Bristol Church Union on October 1st.

There are three points in that Plan, under which the whole may be arranged. First, the creation of a new central organization ; Secondly, the general mode of action to be adopted ; and Thirdly, the exposition of principles and objects.

I. The Resolutions propose Meetings of the Chairmen and Secretaries of Church Unions from time to time in London, in such manner as shall be consistent with the provisions of the Statute Law, for the purpose of consulting, and of taking the necessary steps to promote the objects specified.

The reason for which this organization was preferred to any other of those which have been suggested, was, that it appeared best calculated to maintain the existing local action, which could not be lost without great injury to the cause ; and also to bring together a fair representation of the *general feelings* of Churchmen ; and to form a Body which might be able to exercise independence of thought and action, and might not be under the influence of any particular party or set of men. It was proposed that this Body should meet from time to time in Session, provision being made for the expenses of its members, so

as to secure the presence of all, and thus to avoid the proved inconvenience and risk of permitting the whole management to fall into the hands of some few men resident in London or the vicinity.

We preferred this plan to one which has been frequently suggested and urged—I refer to the plan of merging all Church Unions in one large body, with a Committee sitting in London. Were this plan adopted, the Statute Law would compel the relinquishment of all local organization. *Every thing* must be done by a London Committee: it could not, without a transgression of the law, be assisted by Local Committees, secretaries, or any kind of local organization. The practical result would be, (as far as I can perceive,) a great diminution in the activity of the whole body, and the establishment of a “Tractarian” leadership; for a London Committee would, according to appearances at present, be either distinctly and decidedly under that influence, or would be unable to act unitedly. The mere addition of a number of names from Country Unions to such a Committee would not secure it from assuming a party character; because it is impossible that men residing at a distance can be in London every week, and therefore the resident members would have virtually the whole management in their hands.

This has been actually experienced in the case of the “London Union on Church Matters,” which is now desirous of being recognized as the leading body amongst the Church Unions. Many names of persons residing in all parts of the country appear on its Committee list; but the Union is actually managed by that portion of its Committee who happen to reside in London or within an easy distance. Of the Committee of the “London Union on Church Matters” I wish to speak with the respect which is due to several excellent and distinguished men who are amongst its members. I must, however, candidly

state my own impression to be, that "Tractarian" influence is *practically* predominant in that Committee. It includes the leaders and all the most prominent members of that connexion, who are very active in their attendance; and who appear virtually to have the management of the whole proceedings. I will here merely observe, in reference to the "Metropolitan" Union,—which was constituted as a separate body in London, and, at the time, in opposition to the advice which I ventured to urge—that the members of that body, not being "Tractarian,"—had, I now think, no other course to take, unless they had been contented to permit their own views to be swamped by a "Tractarian" majority in the London Union.

The proceedings of a Special General Meeting of the "London Union on Church Matters," which has just been held, would certainly confirm the impression as to the influence which is predominant in that body. The peculiar prominence given on that occasion in all ways to the principal leader of the "Tractarian" connexion; the enthusiasm which his name appeared to excite; and the publication of his speech, to the exclusion of all others, in the authorized report of the proceedings; would seem to have been specially designed for the purpose of showing the world what the principles of the "London Union" are, in a mode perhaps scarcely less effectual than any written "declaration of principles" would have supplied.

The same inference is, if possible, still more distinctly to be drawn from the recent appointment of a Sub-Committee by this Union, for the purpose of transmitting, to no less a body than the "Convention of the American Church," sitting at Cincinnati, the Resolutions and Proceedings of the Great Meeting of Churchmen held in July on the Gorham case—the names of this Sub-Committee (only four in number), including some of those which are most known to England and to the world as

leaders of the "Tractarian" party, without any others which could counterbalance their weight, and give to the selection any air of impartiality. A fact of this kind speaks volumes as to the principles of the "London Union," and as to its *discretion* also. I make no comment on the fact, that all who had taken part in those Meetings, and all the Unions which had concurred in the arrangements for them, were thus identified, in the most formal manner, without their own consent, with the leadership of the eminent persons referred to.

Holding these views of the prevalent influence in the "London Union on Church Matters"—views not formed without means of forming a judgment, derived from my late connexion with it as a member of Committee, and also from correspondence, I must respectfully, but decidedly, express an opinion, that this body cannot safely be entrusted with the direction of the Church Union movement; because the effect would be, not merely that "Tractarianism" would be immediately supposed by the world to have the lead of that movement, but *it actually would have its direction*; and there are grave objections of various kinds to such a result.

Another reason which appears to disqualify the "London Union on Church Matters" from taking the lead, is derived from a consideration of the general policy advocated by its leaders, which appears to me inconsistent with the very idea of the whole movement. The members of this Union for a considerable time were reluctant to become a Church Union at all, and preferred to act as a Committee for reference and advice. Their leading members have been always avowedly and openly opposed to "agitation." They objected, for a long time, to the assembling of Convocation; and are, perhaps, even now, not very desirous to see it actually meet. They hesitated as to the propriety of the Great Meeting in July, were unfavourable

to other Meetings, and are averse to such active and aggressive movements as are usually called "agitation." They rather look to the spread of their ideas by such modes as could be resorted to equally well if Church Unions did not exist at all. With these views they have, in fact, thrown difficulties in the way of "agitation;" and have evinced in this, and other ways, that they do not comprehend the idea on which the Church Union movement was formed,—the very object of Unions being to promote agitation on certain points with a view to obtain certain benefits for the Church.

A further objection to the "London Union on Church Matters," as a leading or central body, is, that it has always refused to define its objects. Its designs and purposes are even at this moment undefined: its leaders have always strongly objected to define them, because their vagueness leaves them more at liberty. This very fact, however, combined with the "Tractarian" character of the Union, will necessarily render it liable to suspicions in the Public mind, if it should come prominently forward as directing the Church Union movement.

For these various reasons it appears to me, that the "London Union on Church Matters," however respectable may be the names connected with it, however popular it may be with the "Tractarian" party, and however well and thoroughly it may represent the policy and principles of that section of the Church, cannot be accepted as the representative and guide of a movement which comprises individuals and bodies which are *not* Tractarian.

Instead, therefore, of proposing the "London" Church Union (or any development of it, in the shape of additional members nominated by itself) as the central body, we proposed a *virtual* representation of all the Unions (an *actual* representation being illegal); because we were of opinion, that by such a measure, we should at once

take the most legitimate and unexceptionable course in constituting a central body ; and should also be most likely to obtain a body of working, energetic, and practical men ; and, in fine, should have a fair prospect of avoiding the risk of any undue preponderance of party influence.

II. I now come to the second point in the Resolutions proposed for consideration.—I allude to the *general mode of action* to be adopted henceforward by the Church Union movement.

The reasons for which we deemed it advisable to indicate generally the system to be pursued, were twofold. In the first place, we thought it desirable to point out to those who might be disposed to unite with the movement, that it was possessed of various and sufficient means of influencing public opinion, and of promoting its ends ; and, besides this, we had already experienced so many impediments, and so much opposition in the course of our movement, from men who were averse to *all agitation*, and therefore, in point of fact, to the very idea of the Union movement, that we felt it very essential that the principle of legitimate “ agitation ” should be established beyond the reach of further dispute. Persons who are *opposed* to “ agitation ” may be right or wrong in their policy ; but they can no more *co-operate* with those who have established Church Unions for the express purpose of “ agitating,” than Whigs could co-operate with Tories in the days of our fathers. One principle or the other must rule : they cannot exercise a divided dominion. It is true, that some amount of actual co-operation *has been* effected ; but it has been effected in the midst of such struggles between the movement principle and the anti-movement principle as cannot be continued further.

These circumstances will sufficiently prove, that in describing generally the mode of action to be pursued, we did not introduce a trifling or unnecessary detail, or a point

which we could safely have left undetermined. It involved, in fact, the question, whether the Church Union system was to be an agitating system, endeavouring, in all available and legitimate ways, to influence the public mind and the Legislature; or whether it was to avoid meetings and agitation generally, and to remain chiefly on the defensive, waiting for attacks, and endeavouring to meet them in the best way it could.

III. The third point for consideration in the Resolutions is, *the Statement of Principles and Objects*.

It has been already remarked, that in any attempt on our part to influence the great body of the Laity of England, it is indispensably necessary to place before them, distinctly and plainly, the objects which are sought for, and the reasons and grounds on which they are sought. It was proposed in the Resolutions to effect this, by preparing and issuing a Paper—a species of manifesto—stating the present difficulties and dangers of the Church of England, and grounding on this a demand for certain securities. The practical use of such a document, emanating from a body representing the Church Unions, would be this.—Every one who wished to promote the extension of Church Unions, or to join local Unions, or Societies of any kind with the same objects, and for the purpose of co-operating, would be enabled to go to his acquaintance and neighbours, and to put into their hands an *authorized* exposition of the objects, reasons, and principles of the whole movement. He would not be put in the position of stating merely *his own* view of the movement: he would have it stated by authority; and all the common objections and suspicions would be obviated by the Paper itself.

The circumstances of the times generally render it absolutely necessary, that in going before the people of England to ask their aid for the Church's cause, we should be most

plain and explicit in declaring our principles. Those who are sincerely desirous of obtaining securities for the preservation of the Religious System of the English Church from all those alien influences which are now brought to bear directly upon it, through recent alterations in the Constitution of the State, must expect to find arrayed against them not only the Government with all its dependents and expectants in Church and State, but the whole Radical and Liberal party, the Romish influence, the Dissenting influence, the Infidel party, the Latitudinarian party, a great part of the Conservative party, and, at present, the "Evangelical" section of the Church. The one grand argument which all these opponents have to urge against those who seek for the religious security of the Church of England is, that they are *unfaithful to the Church they seek to protect*. Take from our opponents this weapon; take from them the *power* of representing us, whether truly or untruly, as the secret enemies of those principles we advocate—and no parties or combinations of parties will be able to resist, for any length of time, our claims. It will be impossible to make head against those who merely seek for their own religion the same amount of security and privilege, and the same immunity from the interference of persons of different religious convictions, which are enjoyed by all other religions in England. But, if "hypocrisy" and "treason" be, either justly or unjustly, branded on our cause, it will utterly and certainly fail.

It was under these impressions—under the conviction, that a distinct declaration of entire fidelity to the English Church was the first and most essential element in any system of co-operation in her cause, that, foreseeing the approaching termination of the Gorham controversy, and the necessity of some systematic action subsequently, we proposed, so far back as June last, a plan of combined

action, to be put forth by certain persons, the first article of which was conceived in the following terms:—

- “1. Under the conviction that a Declaration of unanimity in faith is essential to mutual confidence and cordial co-operation, we, the undersigned, do hereby declare our faithful adherence to the doctrine of the Church of England, as set forth in her Liturgy and Articles, and to her Communion, and to that of the orthodox Churches in Scotland, America, and elsewhere, in communion with her; and we earnestly deprecate all secessions from the Church of England¹.”

The Plan, which was submitted to a large private meeting, was rejected mainly by the exertions of the *same* influence which subsequently defeated the Resolutions proposed at Bristol on October 1st. But, in the course of the discussions on the subject, I became aware that this simple declaration of fidelity to the Church of England, and reprobation of secessions, was most repugnant to views entertained in the most influential quarter. This declaration was, in fact, the great and sole point of objection, urged repeatedly in the quarter referred to.

Having withdrawn this Plan on finding the opposition made to it, I felt, indeed, that there was a great evil in continuing without any fixed principles and any settled plan of action; yet I felt assured that what had occurred would be overruled for good; and as, after some time, it

¹ This form was finally proposed on July 24th. It had been first proposed on June 27th thus: “Under the conviction that unanimity in faith is essential to mutual confidence and cordial co-operation, we declare our inviolable fidelity to the doctrines and communion of the English Church, and of the orthodox Churches in Scotland, America, and elsewhere, in communion with her, and that we deprecate all secessions from the Church of England as schismatical and without excuse.”

became essential to take immediate steps to establish an organization, and at the same time to avoid the *impending* evil of an absolute "Tractarian" ascendancy, it was resolved to bring forward at Bristol the Resolutions of October 1st; and in those resolutions is included a much fuller and more explicit statement of principles than that which had been rejected some months before; so that good was, in the end, brought out of evil.

I must confess that the repugnance manifested even to a Declaration of Fidelity to the Church of England was a very perplexing circumstance to me; and it was combined with other causes of uneasiness which then arose, on finding that other eminent persons were unwilling to respond to the sentiments of unconditional and perpetual loyalty to the English Church, and opposition to Rome, which I stated to them in correspondence.

I feel assured that the opposition which was offered to the declaration of fidelity to the Church of England did not arise from want of love for the Church; for I have every reason to believe that, in the quarter where that objection arose, there has always existed an earnest anxiety to prevent persons from leaving us for Rome, and I have not the slightest doubt that many persons have been kept by that influence from taking so lamentable a step. But it is certainly a most serious consideration, that the policy in religious matters, pursued (without doubt) most conscientiously, by some pious and eminent persons, should actually interpose to prevent an open declaration of fidelity to the Church of England. If the simple declaration of our faith in the English Church is not permissible, lest we should in some way offend the prejudices of those of our brethren who have, unfortunately, a tendency towards Rome, and whom, it is hoped, by avoiding all such perilous expositions of our belief, to retain for a few months, or years, longer in our communion, I must say that we are really

placed in a condition of subserviency to men of unsound views, such as I, for one, cannot consent to.

The want of firmness which was evinced in declining to make positive declarations of fidelity to the Church of England, led, of course, to the adoption of the more stringent Declaration which is comprised in the Resolutions of October 1st, and which not only includes a statement of the Catholic and Apostolic character of the Church of England, but also a recognition of the lawfulness of the *Reformation*, and a direct repudiation of *Romanism*, as well as of the other errors of the day. It is not the habit of Orthodoxy to make concessions to any timid and uncertain view on great religious questions. Where it discovers men to be reluctant to confess the Truth, it never yields to any such defective faith, but presses more strongly and distinctly the confession of the Truth. It was partly because we felt that there was too prevalent a weakness of faith in reference to dealing openly with Romanism, that we felt it our duty to press an unequivocal and open repudiation of it.

The Resolutions, comprising this Declaration or Statement of Principles, were first proposed at a General Meeting of the Bristol Church Union on the 9th of September², when explanations were given of their general object and purport; but they were deemed of too much importance to be adopted without due deliberation, and a Special General Meeting was summoned for the 1st of October to consider them, the Resolutions being in the mean time circulated amongst the members of the Union.

It soon became manifest that our Resolutions were destined to cause no inconsiderable excitement—far more than we had anticipated. We received earnest applications either to withdraw them for the sake of peace, or to omit the references they contained to Romanism, or to the

² See Appendix, No. II.

Reformation in the Sixteenth Century, lest many men might be induced to secede from the Union, or even from the Church of England, in the event of our succeeding. But we felt that far higher interests and duties demanded from us a steadfast adherence to those features of our Resolutions which we regarded as essential; and we therefore declined to omit our recognition of the Reformation, or essentially to modify or to omit our statements with regard to Romanism.

Under these circumstances the opponents of the Resolutions proceeded to prepare Amendments to be proposed at the Special General Meeting. A printed paper of Amendments, drawn up and circulated under the directions of the leading influence opposed to us, is now before me. It is as follows:—

“Resolutions and Form to be proposed as Amendments to Mr. Palmer’s Resolutions and Declaration, at the Meeting of the Bristol Church Union, on the 1st October, 1850. The Amendments are printed in Italics.

“I. That an organization of Churchmen for the vindication of the faith and the rights of the Church, more extensive and more united than has hitherto been realized, is *highly desirable, if the same can be legally effected*; and that, in order to be successful, such an organization requires to be formed upon definite principles, and for definite objects.

“II. *That the only legal way of effecting such organization, appears to be the dissolution of the Unions, and their combining afresh in one large Society.*

“III. That in order to insure mutual confidence among those who shall co-operate in such an organization, and to inspire confidence in the minds of the great body of Churchmen, Clergy, and Laity, it is requisite that a *form*

should be prepared to be signed by each Member of such Society, declaring his faithfulness to the Church of England.

“IV. That it is expedient, further, to prepare a statement of the present position of the Church, having regard to the long-continued suppression of her liberties,—to the altered character of the Union between Church and State, in consequence of the altered character of the State itself,—and setting forth the specific grievances which have arisen out of this state of things.

“V. That it is further expedient to prepare a statement of objects, in which prominence shall be given to the following:—

“1. The revival of the Synodal action of the Church ;

“2. Security for the appointment of orthodox Bishops ;

“3. Protection for the Church’s faith from the interference of any authority and influence alien to her principles and constitution ;

“4. The removal of all legal impediments to the proper exercise of spiritual discipline in the Church, and to her extension commensurately with the wants of the nation ;

“5. *The vindication of the Church’s Doctrine of Holy Baptism recently impugned.*

“VI. That for the attainment of the above and other kindred objects, the following measures be recommended for *consideration* :—

“1. To convene, from time to time, Public Meetings of Churchmen on a large scale ; and in the first instance to make arrangements for the Meeting proposed to be held in February next ;

“2. To expand the Church Union organization locally and parochially, especially among the middling and lower classes ;

“3. To establish a cheap, popular Periodical, for diffusing among the middle and lower classes information in

the principles and objects of the organization, and as a record of its proceedings;

“4. To establish, under proper central management, a Fund for the promotion of Church objects, and to urge upon all who are desirous of promoting Church Emancipation, and especially upon the Laity, the necessity of contributing on a scale of unusual magnitude, in order to collect ample funds in furtherance of the objects of the organization, as having a claim upon the active and liberal support of Churchmen, prior to all other claims whatsoever.

“VII. That the foregoing Resolutions be communicated to the several Unions; *and to Members of Convocation who may be likely to take an interest in the plan:* and that the Unions be invited to send their Chairmen and Secretaries to a Conference to be held in London early in November, *to which Conference the Members of Convocation be also invited—the special object of the Conference being to deliberate on the expediency and mode of fusing the Unions, or such of them as may be willing to combine into one Society; and of preparing a Constitution for the same, which shall both provide for their efficacy, and be agreeable to Law.*

“Proposed amended Form to be Signed by Members of the proposed Society:—

“I hereby declare that I believe the English Church, being a true portion of the One Catholic and Apostolic Church, to have a claim upon our undivided and faithful allegiance, and that I desire and intend by the grace of God to live and die in her Communion.”

It will be observed that this paper adopts the whole substance of the Resolutions, with the following remarkable exceptions:—First, it *omits* all censure or even mention of Rome or Romanism. Secondly, it *omits* all

reference to the Reformation. Thirdly, it substitutes for a virtual representation of all the Country Church Unions, *one Union, with its Committee, of course, sitting permanently in London, and therefore virtually subject to the predominant influence there.* It is also worthy of remark, that this paper substitutes for the Declaration proposed in the Resolutions to be put forth by authority (but not proposed as a Test to any individual) a direct, formal, and *illegal* Test, “to be signed by members of the proposed society³.” This fact appears worthy of remark, because one ground of objection, most earnestly and perseveringly urged against our Resolutions, by the very persons who prepared these Amendments, was, that *we were imposing a Test!*

We subsequently learned, that certain other influential persons amongst those who were dissatisfied with our paper, had drawn up another Amendment, which proposed to substitute for the Test just referred to, a form, *also to be subscribed*, but which was to include a disclaimer of the Papal Supremacy, and the Romish additions to Primitive Faith and Worship, omitting, however, all mention of the Reformation. Thus, *this* class of our opponents, also, were ready to impose a formal Test⁴.

Such being the position of things, the 1st of October arrived; but the Amendments above referred to were not then brought forward, probably in consequence of some verbal alterations which we introduced, with consent of the meeting, and which rendered the Amendments unavailable⁵. But in lieu of them an Amendment was proposed *directly negating the proposal*, and which was ultimately carried, to the following effect:—

³ Any such Test not authorized by law, is prohibited by Statute 39 Geo. III. cap. 79; and 57 Geo. III. cap. 19.

⁴ It seems from the Report of Dr. Pusey’s Speech at the London Church Union, that this Test was withdrawn, because it was “*ambiguous*,” not because it was a Test.

⁵ See Appendix, No. III.

“That whereas the Bristol Union was designed to be a Union of all Churchmen desirous of co-operating in the promotion of certain defined objects, it cannot consent to narrow the basis of its constitution by identifying itself with an organization which is founded upon the acceptance of a declaration of faith over and above the existing formularies of the English Church, which it desires to make the rule of its proceedings.”

The debate which took place on this occasion being of a private nature, it is not my purpose to refer to the particulars of what occurred ⁶, further than to state, that the difference turned (as the Amendment indicates) almost wholly on the Statement of Principles proposed to be put forth, which its opponents objected to as a Test, excluding men of a certain class of opinions and views, and making statements with reference to the Church of England and the Church of Rome which were most presumptuous, or needless, or uncharitable, or in other respects improper; and while some speakers declared their attachment to the Church of England, and disclaimed the imputation of any doubt as regarded her orthodoxy, the majority appeared to agree, that any statements against Rome were highly inexpedient. No one advocated the claims or doctrines of the Church of Rome, but the general feeling was opposed to any censure of them.

We were perfectly prepared to hear objections of this kind, and were by no means surprised to find that a large majority of the meeting were willing to concur in them.

⁶ Among the speakers on behalf of the Resolutions, besides myself, were, the Rev. Prebendary Clarke, Revs. G. A. Denison, Dr. Biber, John Jebb, J. B. Sweet, J. Bandinel, and Henry Hoare, Esq. Among the speakers for the Amendment were, Lord Forbes, A. J. B. Hope, Esq., M.P., F. H. Dickinson, Esq., Rev. Dr. Pusey, Revs. J. Keble, Dr. Mill, C. Marriott, W. Scott, T. Fortescue, A. Fane, M. W. Mayow, A. Watson, Sir G. Prevost, Bart., and Canon Barrow.

Having anticipated the possibility of such an event, we had come to the resolution, that if our proposal was rejected decidedly, it would be our duty to carry out the design with the aid of those who might approve of it; and on the rejection of the proposal, we accordingly constituted the same evening, as we had previously agreed on, THE SOMERSET AND BRISTOL UNION, with a view to sustain and carry into effect the proposal.

The motives which induced us to take this course were as follows.—We felt that the various Church Unions which had already more or less approved of the design, such as the Metropolitan, the Leicester, Dorset, Birmingham, and other Unions, would have reason to complain of a want of firmness on our part, if we relinquished altogether, at the first trial of strength, the design which we had submitted to all the Church Unions of England, and which had not hitherto been opposed by any.

But we were influenced by much weightier considerations than these. We felt that were we to give way on this occasion, when the whole strength of a peculiar party in the Church was brought to bear upon us, for the purpose of crushing the attempt we were making to develop the distinctly “Church of England” character of the movement; were we to adopt the ordinary course of submitting as a minority to the resolution of the majority, we should be merely handing over the future undisputed sway of the whole Church Union movement to an influence, which, however we might respect and regard individuals, we could not, on the whole, conscientiously feel to be a *safe* influence, as the actual, or even as the reputed *governing* influence of the Church movement. A concession on our part at that moment, would have given permanently to the movement, *and in the eyes of the public*, the very kind of party character, which we were most anxious to prevent it from acquiring.

In addition to this, we should have conceded the principle ourselves, that the Church Union movement, after having spoken most freely and fully on doctrinal questions in the case of Gorham; after having, without scruple, denounced as heresy in every possible shape and way, certain erroneous tenets on the subject of Baptismal Regeneration; had a right to refuse to make declarations against Romanism, when fairly called on to do so. We should have assented to the policy, which has been for some time prevalent in some quarters, of keeping silence on the subject of Romish errors, and abstaining from warning men against them. We should have not merely consented that this policy should be acted on in modes which did not commit us personally, and for which we were not responsible; but we should have consented that this policy should be sanctioned by the Church Union movement, and should henceforward direct and guide that movement.

And, in fine, we should have consented, that the whole cause of Church emancipation—the whole effort for the protection of our faith and discipline from the interference of alien influences—should have become identified in the public mind with tendencies more or less Romanizing. We should have permitted it to be seen by the Public, that we could consent to let a moderate but distinct profession of fidelity to the Church of England, and of repudiation of Romanism, be set aside on so weak and flimsy a pretence, as that which the Amendment brought forward. A statement of principles by Church Unions, was to the supporters of this Amendment, “a declaration of faith *over and above* the existing Formularies of the English Church,”—and from such a declaration they seemed to shrink in dismay. Yet there was an apparent want of reality here, for the very men who argued thus, had *themselves* intended to bring forward Amendments, containing

declarations of faith, *over and above* our Formularies, but for a change in the wording of our Resolutions just before the meeting; and they had all been for months engaged in the work of making just such declarations against *Gorham*. When the Church Unions were called upon, and when Meetings were called upon, to make explicit declarations of faith in general terms, in the Baptismal question, no one ever dreamt of raising an objection; but the moment that it came to be the question, whether the Truth was to be stated in general terms in reference to *Romanism*, it was immediately discovered to be unlawful to make a declaration on *any* doctrinal subject; and the "Formularies of the English Church" became the sole possible exposition of opinion. We might without scruple, explain, state, develop, elucidate, and detail the Catholic doctrine of Baptism. We might put it in every light; adapt it to the mental condition of the public; give to it the life and reality of our actual living convictions; reduce it to summary forms. We were at perfect liberty to bring it forward in every shape and way we liked;—in petitions, protests, addresses, statements, declarations, &c. But when we were to come to speak of the *Papal Supremacy*, or *the duty of not communicating with Rome until securities had been obtained for the Truth*—then all was changed in a moment. We were then referred to the *Formularies* of the Church! We were to become dumb, and our faculties were to be frozen up, as soon as ever we were to speak of Romanism! I must here distinctly explain that it is not intended to impute Romanizing tendencies to the great body of those who voted against us. No imputation could be more unjust. I only regret that so many good and sound men should have permitted themselves to be placed in a false position, by following the guidance of influential persons, without a sufficient knowledge of the circumstances of the case.

The truth is, that the parties who have adopted the Amendment proposed at Bristol, have placed themselves in a very serious difficulty. The Bristol and the London Unions have tied their own hands from acting in future against *any* doctrinal errors: for how is it possible that bodies which have refused to make any declaration against Romanism, because it would narrow the basis of their societies, can make declarations in the shape of petitions, protests, or addresses against any other unsound tenets? These Unions have by their own act, excluded themselves from the power of defending the Faith.

It may be said that we might, in case of the decision against us at the Bristol Union, have contented ourselves with making a solemn Protest against the proceedings, and have refrained from constituting another Church Union. But this course would not have avoided the evil of manifest division. The public journals would have made exactly the same comments on our "Protest" that they have on our secession. It would have been just as much a "split" in the "Tractarian Camp," and a division between the "Romanizers" and those who did not approve their views. So that nothing would really have been gained by this course; and, on the other hand, we should have left all those members of the Union who acted with us without any means of promoting their own views. We should have left them without the power of taking part in the Church Union movement on principles they approved; and they would have been unrepresented in the next meeting of the officers of Unions. Independently of this, it was eminently requisite that some organization should be provided for sound Churchmen in that district; because we could not, and cannot, anticipate for the Bristol Union, or for any other Union which refuses to declare its principles, and to take its ground fairly and openly, such continued confidence on the part of the Church, or such

union in itself, as will for any length of time keep it together. That the difficulties of the Bristol Union are not inconsiderable already, we may infer from the proposal of its President to give him the power of remodelling the whole executive. Under these circumstances, I think we have done what is, on the whole, most calculated eventually to promote the interest of the cause, by constituting a new organization, on sound principles, in that locality.

After long and earnest thought on the subject, I remain more and more convinced, that rather than yield to so mistaken, so weak, and so inconsistent a course, as that which was taken by our opponents on the 1st of October, we were justified in encountering the evil of separation, even though that separation should have the effect of temporarily retarding to appearance, or even in reality, the progress of the Church Union movement. God will, we know, protect His Church: but we could not have expected His blessing on our labours, if we had given way to what our consciences told us was wrong; if we had permitted any compromise of that holy Truth which we had undertaken to maintain.

The observations which have been made, will, in some degree, explain the motives which influenced us in resolving on the course which was adopted, in consequence of the decision of the Meeting at Bristol. The formation of a new Church Union in support of the Plan and Principles contained in the Resolutions, was the strongest practical proof we could afford of our determination to adhere to the policy therein comprised, and to carry it into effect with whatever means we possessed. ✓

The formation of this Union is the commencement of a new interest in the Church—a distinctly “Church of England” organization. The principles on which it stands are as much opposed to Rome, as to all other systems contrary

to that of the English Church. We have hitherto been identified with able and pious men, who have not taken any decided line against Romanism, and who are still unwilling to do so; and we have been co-operating with what is commonly called the "Tractarian" party, though not forming any part of it ourselves. Our position will henceforward be distinct, and whilst we shall be happy to co-operate with that section of the Church, or with any other, for common objects, it must be as an independent interest, acting on defined principles.

Even if the recent division at Bristol should be healed, it will not less be our duty to maintain a distinctly defined and intelligible position, as a "Church of England" interest. There is quite room enough for such an interest. We have "High Church" and "Low Church," "Evangelicals" and "Puseyites," "Rationalists" and "Romanizers." Is there any reason why there should not be a "Church of England" interest also? The parties referred to have surely not absorbed the whole population of the country. There may still be *some* space left for those who want to stand by the Church of England as *a whole*;—not merely by her Baptismal faith,—not merely by her declarations against Romanism,—but for all and every part of her religious system, and without ill-will towards any of her members. It may surely be allowable to declare ourselves in favour of the genuine old English Church, neither "Romanized," nor "Liberalized," nor "Calvinized," nor "Germanized,"—but simply in the form, and with the faith she has for so many ages possessed. If others are not satisfied, we are sorry for it; but we must take leave to act on our own convictions. We love not new wine; "the old is better."

Those Church Unions which wish to place themselves under the immediate direction of the "London Union on Church Matters," and the principles it represents, will, of

course, do so. We should regret, if it were for a moment imagined, that it is our wish to interfere in any way with the principles and objects of that Union, and the party it represents. We hope that we shall be enabled to act with them for those objects which we have in common; but we claim equal freedom of action and opinion for ourselves. We cannot consent to permit our course of proceeding, or our statement of principles to be influenced, directly or indirectly, by the apprehension of taking some course which may be distasteful to persons who prefer the Church of Rome to that of England; and who can only be induced to remain a little longer in our communion by indulging them in the practice of Romish devotions, and in the belief of Romish doctrines. The formation of a distinctly and purely "Church of England" interest, which shall hold its place, without either deviating towards Rome in the one direction, or towards dissenting tenets and practices, or Latitudinarianism, on the other, will, I trust, be a source of strength hereafter to the Church. It may be that at first we shall be regarded with a degree of jealousy by some of those with whom we have been lately co-operating: but should our course be that of open, honest, and determined loyalty to the religious system of the English Church; should it be felt and seen, that we are *never* ashamed to confess the truths which she teaches, and to maintain them against all her various opponents; should our policy be without mystery and concealment, without contrivance, without craft, and without fear; then I feel and hope, that we shall receive the confidence of no inconsiderable proportion of the sincere members of the Church of England. Men will take part with us, who would never have united themselves with any movement, the principles and objects of which were undefined. So that, while a temporary check may be experienced from the present division, it may

probably lead, eventually, to a considerable gain to the Church's cause.

But there is another view of the subject which is not undeserving of remark. The course we have taken in maintaining the assertion of the distinctive principles of the Church of England against Romanism, and in separating from those with whom we had been acting, because we observed in the course which they had taken a deficiency in zeal against Romish error, is, in itself, calculated to afford to the feelings of the people some slight atonement for the outrages which have been inflicted on them by the disgraceful secessions which we have witnessed for several years. To that national feeling—a feeling which is, on the whole, just and reasonable—far more consideration is due, than has been, in fact, accorded to it; and were it possible for us to have taken any step which could have made to the English public some more effectual atonement than we have been enabled to afford, it would have been wise and right in us to have taken that step. The apparently unimportant circumstance of our secession at Bristol may have saved us from difficulties of no ordinary magnitude. I cannot estimate the amount of public excitement which might have been created, if secession after secession had continued; if persons far more influential than those who have already gone had followed their example; and if the Church Unions, and the “High-Church” Clergy had been supposed to be *all* more or less tending in the same direction. Nor can I calculate what *results* might have followed from the irritation of public feeling; more especially when excited to the utmost, as it would probably soon have been, by an “Evangelical” organization. One result at all events would have followed. The opponents of the Church's liberties would have been invested with uncontrollable power by public opinion. The existence of a decidedly anti-Romanizing

movement will, I think, have had the effect of preventing this.

Supposing, however, that no positive *blow* had been struck against the principles of the Church, the continuance of a Church Union movement for another year, without any explanation of its principles, would probably have given to the opponents of the cause of Church emancipation the power of incurably prejudicing the minds of the people against the whole movement as Romanizing; and, in contemplation of this danger, I would very much prefer to see the whole Church Union movement fall to the ground at once, than see it continue without well-defined principles; because an organization can be easily created, and the cause of the Church will always find friends; but a people once deeply prejudiced, may never recover from their prejudices.

I have not the slightest fear but that the cause of the Church of England will prevail, because it is founded on the principles of equal justice and of religious liberty. The success of this cause does not depend on the Church Union movement, though, at the present moment, that organization is advocating it. All that is to be feared is, that the just, plain, and thoroughly honest cause of the liberties of the Church of England should be liable to calumnies and prejudices, without the power of clearing itself from them. The sacrifice of the whole Church Union movement appears to be a far less evil, than such a result as this.

But, it may be objected, that the Church Union movement was not founded on any express statement of principles, and appeals may be made to the original rules of those Societies, in proof that they were intended to include men of all religious views, who were really attached to the English Church; and it may be asked, "Why do you now seek to give to those Societies a character they did

not originally possess? Why do you, who founded or suggested the foundation of these Societies, now seek to impress upon them a character you did not originally propose?"

This is a very plausible objection, but I think a little consideration will show that it is without force. We, who were the proposers, and founders, and first supporters of the Church Union movement, admit then, that in proposing and establishing that movement we looked to unite all who were really attached to the Church of England, for the advocacy of certain definite objects, which we believed all parties to be agreed on. I refer more especially to Church extension, including an increase of the Episcopate, with some provisions for the appointment of good and efficient bishops, the restoration of corrective discipline, and the establishment of a Synod for the Church. These were matters which were not, at that time, in dispute between parties, but in which the majority concurred; and we hoped for the co-operation of all Churchmen in these common objects. The Church Union organization was enabled to act very effectively in the Gorham controversy; and its action in such a mode gave to the movement a relation to controversies within the Church which it had not previously possessed. In the course of the Gorham controversy many steps were taken by the Church Unions which divested the movement of that simply practical character in which it had commenced.

This, then, being the case, and the Church Union movement being also induced, by circumstances arising in the Gorham controversy, to take a decided part in favour of Church Emancipation; and, moreover, the leaders of the "Tractarian" Connexion having been introduced by the London Union into a very prominent position in the movement; and various persons of more or less justly

suspected principles being connected with us and our cause openly; it became essential, that when the excitement on the Gorham affair had died away, and the Union movement, with its new character and purposes, was to enter on a course of effort to attain its objects, such effort should be made with a full understanding of the distinct objects we were looking for, and of the principles by which we were influenced.

This conviction did not take its rise from any of the recent secessions; it existed before any of those events took place, and was founded on deeper reasons than any "panic" or fear on account of those secessions. I have no wish to underrate the evil of those apostacies; but I distinctly say, that our Resolutions arose from somewhat a larger view of the position of the whole Church question than could have been caused by the secession of this or that gentleman, though I think that such cases certainly furnish some additional reasons for the course we felt it our duty to take⁷.

It has been objected, that all Declarations are useless—that the world will continue to suspect us of Romanizing tendencies, no matter what we may say. I cannot admit the force of this objection. Those who have advocated the Resolutions are not in the habit of being charged with insincerity; and, if they are not, it is because they have practised no reserve as to their real sentiments. I do not pretend to say that the Statement of principles contained in the Resolutions would of itself allay all suspicions, or prevent opponents from imputing, through mistake, cer-

⁷ I need scarcely add, that our policy was not the result of an *escapade* at Bristol, which I can still scarcely regard in a serious light. I allude to the *apparently* grave proposition of one of the members of the Committee of that Union, that if "the purely spiritual authority" of the Crown were interfered with, it should be "restored to the see from which it was at the same time, and by the same Statute Law, most unrighteously and profanely removed!"

tain tendencies which really did not exist. The Statement of Principles is not supposed to possess any magical power of charming away all opposition or distrust; but if the policy of frankness and openness in which that statement originated is uniformly carried out—if Churchmen learn to speak openly and fearlessly their real sentiments, it will soon become *impossible* to misrepresent them. Let them only habitually proclaim THE TRUTH in its length and breadth without reserve and timidity; and they may set at defiance all attempts at calumny: such attempts will only be destructive to the characters of those who make them.

After all that has been already said on the subject of a Test, it will be needless to take up space in dwelling here at length on the subject; I can only say, that the objection does not come with a good grace from those who had themselves drawn up and circulated a Test in lieu of that which they imagined (through mistake) to be included in the Resolutions, declaring that the subscriber would “*live and die* in the communion” of the English Church; which certainly is “over and above” any thing stated in our Formularies. I see nothing objectionable, in point of principle, in tests of this kind; because all our subscriptions to Articles, &c., involve the principle; and I can very well conceive circumstances, in which it might be advisable to impose additional formal tests, if legally permissible; but I must leave to the opponents of the Resolutions the honour of having suggested a *formal Test* on the present occasion. We merely proposed to those who had been making innumerable declarations against Gorhamism, that they should make one more—against Romanism.

I must, however, say a few words more on this subject. Without doubt, any action of a body associated for such purposes as those of the Church Unions, which involves a question of *principle*, may be represented as a Test, and may *act* as a Test, *i. e.* may, in fact, define the character

or principles of that body, so that some persons may not feel themselves at liberty to remain connected with it, and others may feel themselves prevented by a sense of duty from entering it. But still a Statement of Principles is meant for a different purpose from that of a Test, according to the common meaning of that term. The one is to explain to the world the principles actually held by a body of men ; the other is to restrict the conditions of membership—to prevent certain persons from uniting with that body. This may be illustrated by the Articles of the Church of England, which are a Declaration of Principles for the whole Church, and yet are only proposed to the Clergy with a direct view to restrict them to certain tenets. Now the *object* in view in proposing the Statement of Principles at Bristol, was simply to make known to the world more distinctly, principles, which, it was conceived, were inherent in every “ Church of England ” body, and which we had a right to assume to be held by the “ Bristol,” and other Church Unions. That this “ Statement of Principles ” might operate as a Test, just as the Articles to *all* members of the Church of England, or the petitions on the Gorham controversy, or on the Marriage Bill, or on any other point involving questions of principle, might act in regard to the members of Church Unions, we were aware ; but we did not put forth that paper with the *object* of excluding any one from co-operation who was disposed to concur in the principles we put forward, as has been very invidiously and untruly stated again and again ; and although it has been argued that our *object* would not have been attained if certain persons had accepted our proposition, and all had gone on harmoniously, I must decidedly say that it *would* have been attained. The general character of the movement *would* have been to a considerable extent set right ; though some of its members

might, perhaps, have committed an *inconsistency*, most highly honourable and beneficial to themselves.

It is alleged that there can be no use in any Declaration of Principles—that we are bound to the Church by our baptism, confirmation, communion, and worship, and early associations, and by the works we are enabled to do in her communion; and therefore there can be no possible use in our declaring our principles, or negating errors of any kind: any such course, it is argued, cannot strengthen our love to the Church. I perfectly admit that it cannot do so; but the whole argument has really nothing to do with the question, for it was never intended to *strengthen* the love of members of Church Unions to the Church of England, by inducing them to declare their principles. The only object was that they should *manifest* their love for the Church in this way. It was assumed, of course, that they loved the Church. All that was required was that they should take such steps as would *convince the Nation* that they loved it, and that they were prepared to maintain its principles against all the errors opposed to it.

Again it has been ingeniously said, that a Declaration is “less, or the same as, or more than, the Formularies of the Church of England. If less, it is idle; if the same, superfluous; if more, it is wrong.” But really those who argue thus do not see that they tie their own hands from ever contending for the Truth in combination with others. This principle would have prevented all the petitions in the Gorham controversy. In every instance the very same argument might have been alleged against them; as it might be in any other parallel case. And to consider the difficulty itself, it is quite evident that cases may occur in which we may be called on to do more than fall back on the wording of our Formularies. Suppose *e. g.* that

men interpret the Articles on the principles of *Tract XC.*, or the Baptismal Service on the principles of Gorham, will a mere appeal to the Formularies declare our own belief? Or supposing that, when a petition had been proposed to a Church Union containing a very full and orthodox exposition of the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, it had availed itself of the logical dilemma above referred to, what would the world have said of its belief on the matter of Regeneration? Would its views have been very intelligible? Would it have acted in the spirit of faith?

I am afraid the ingenious inventors of this argument may find themselves ere long struggling on the horns of their own dilemma, without the possibility of extricating themselves. Dilemmas are edged tools, which sometimes cut the hands of their employers.

To say that it was our purpose to "turn out" any set of men from the Unions, or to "censure" this or that individual or class, is, as far as I know, a very great misrepresentation of the views of those who brought forward the Resolutions of October 1. Our object was, simply to define the principles of the movement, which we believed essential to its success. We could not, however, relinquish this object in deference to the feelings or views of this or that party, when we were satisfied that such views were mistaken.

I believe that I have noticed the principal objections which have been advanced against our proceedings at Bristol; and I trust that we have at least not acted without reason, or under any hasty impulse, but from a sense of most solemn duty, and from a firm conviction.

Feeling assured that we have only done our duty, I must at the same time express sincere regret at the course taken by those who have opposed us in the Bristol and the London Union, because that course will only involve *them*

in difficulties, and place them in a painful position. They are prevented from stating their principles on any subject, and they will be identified with views which very many of their members do not entertain. I much regret that the more influential members of those Bodies should have led them into the position in which they will find themselves placed.

For myself, I can only say, that so strongly am I convinced of the necessity of some ostensible body, which shall represent the pure and unadulterated principles of the Church of England, without any admixture from other sources, that if only half a dozen men in England could be induced to combine on those principles, I would unite with them. Such a body, however weak numerically, will be strong in its principles. It will be placed amidst parties the most various, some who wish for alterations in our services and tenets in the direction of Calvinism and Dissent; others who wish for the removal of subscription to the Articles, and the introduction of Socinian, Unitarian, and Rationalistic errors; others who wish for alterations in the direction of Romanism, and the restoration of communion with the See of Rome at almost any cost. If, amidst all these tendencies, there are those who are prepared to stand as a rock against all such innovations, and who will avow their determination to maintain the whole religious system of the Church of England as it has come down to us from the period of the Reformation, reserving to the Church herself the power of supplying any proved deficiencies, I feel assured that they will fulfil no ignoble and no uninfluential part in the times that are before us. If, when men's hearts are sinking, and doubt and dismay are on every side, there are those who are the avowed and fearless champions of "Church of England" Truth, they may have the power of doing much for the protection of their beloved Church—much for

the maintenance of God's Truth. And the time may come, when to that band of firm and unfalteringly loyal hearts—to those who have gone through evil report and good report in deep, unswerving, resolute, and courageous faithfulness to their Church's principles—that Church herself may look, when this World may have left her to pursue her way in poverty and in adversity. We live in times when the foundations of all established systems are deeply shaken. Our eyes may witness the subversion of thrones, and dynasties, and constitutions, which seem at this moment fixed and enduring. And who shall say that England's time may not come at length, and we, like others, have to drink of the cup of God's wrath? Let it be the hope of Churchmen, that when that awful hour comes, we may be able to carry on our religion amidst the disruption of society, and that it may then be seen, that there was a deeper and more enduring principle of fidelity to the Church of England than this World could give or take away. Looking to the future, no less than to the present, I remain convinced that the time has come for the closer communion of those, whatever may be their numbers or influence, who are devoted, in single-minded fidelity and zeal, to the sound and orthodox system of the English Church as delivered to us from the Reformation.

And is not the Religion of the Church of England worthy of the best affections of her members? Should we do well to exchange it for any vague or untried system, borrowed from the Church of Rome, and dignified with the name of Catholicism, or for any other rival system? As one of her humblest members—one who feels himself most unworthy of that which he esteems his highest and happiest privilege on earth—the honour of ministering in her most hallowed service—as one who feels that it is not for such as him to offer to her the tribute of devotion—yet, even as such, it is impossible for him who writes this, to refrain from

tendering to that most sacred, most beloved, most blessed Faith, the tribute of his unlimited, absolute, and unchangeable allegiance and love. The maintenance of that Faith in its integrity ever has been, and will be to him, the first object that he has on earth; because he is most firmly convinced—and reflection and enquiry have only more deeply rooted that conviction in his mind, that this Church is faithful to Jesus Christ;—that there is no religious system on earth which so fully and so stedfastly retains the deposit of Faith which the Lord and His Apostles entrusted to the care of His Church. “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

If we look on Romanism, we behold the very foundations of all faith sapped and undermined by a pernicious and daring sophistry, which sacrifices the evidences of Christianity itself, in order to build on unbelief a fabric of blind and irrational credulity. We see the worship of the Creator divided with that of the creature—idolatry, in various shapes, polluting the temple of God; and gradually throwing off even the thin disguises by which it sought to palliate its transgressions of God’s laws; the outward form and fleshly ordinance substituted for the inward sacrifice of the heart and life; numerous additions to, and corruptions of the Faith, obstinately maintained and justified; a pride which never concedes; an utterly unscrupulous use of means to accomplish its own ascendancy; a tortuous and artful policy, to which simplicity and integrity are strangers; and which often seems to impair the truthfulness even of those who are connected with it by mere sympathy. And, again, when we look to Dissent, in all its causeless and countless subdivisions; with its bitter, angry, jealous, and irritable spirit; and its willingness to

aid the efforts of any cause or principle, however opposed to its own, if by any means, or in any way, it may injure the cause of the Church;—here, surely, we cannot recognize the spirit of the Christian religion.

It is in the Church of England that men will find the most stedfast, most faithful, and most *consistent* Guide. To her, emphatically, belongs the defence of the Christian Faith against Rationalism and Infidelity. Rome, which absolutely denies the genuineness, authenticity, and textual accuracy of the Bible, except as dependent on her own infallibility, can never prove the truth of the Christian Revelation. Her fundamental system of argument renders the task in her hands a contradiction. She has supplied to the Infidel his arguments, and she must admit their force. To the English Church alone, therefore, belongs the Bible, and Christianity, which is founded on it. The Church of Rome has nothing to depend upon, but her own asserted, but unproved, infallibility. She has betrayed the cause of Christianity into the hands of infidelity, and the defence of that cause has devolved on the Church of England.

The Church of England with her Reformed and Apostolically constituted Sister Churches alone can defend Religion against Heathen idolatry. She worships God only, and adheres strictly to the Law and the Gospel; while Romanism is prevented by its own principles from proving to a Heathen that he is bound to worship one God. By the ingenious distinctions as to the objects and kind of worship which it has borrowed from Platonism, and from Heathen philosophy generally, it is left defenceless against Heathenism; while Judaism sees in it the open and direct violator of God's moral law.

With a system thus feeble and faithless in the very first principles of Religion, compare the Faith of the Church of England—a Faith based on the Word of

God, and supported by the testimony of Christendom even from the beginning—a Faith which fears no inquiry, while it is firm in its own convictions. I do not claim for the Church of England the attribute of Infallibility, which she does not claim for herself; nor do I pretend to say, that there is no point whatever in her system which is susceptible of improvement. Perhaps there is not a single member of the Church who, if he had been appointed to frame her religious system, would not have moulded it somewhat differently from what it is, in some detail or other. But I can at least state my own experience with regard to the existing system, as handed down to us from the Reformation. I can testify, that I have never yet encountered a difficulty on any point of the position, doctrine, or discipline of the Church (and difficulties must at times occur to all inquiring men); that I have not found it, on examination, to arise from my own imperfect information, narrow and limited views, and want of reflection on the great principles of religion. When I have been enabled to view those subjects with more knowledge, and with more comprehensive thoughts, I have *invariably* discovered, that the Church was thoroughly right and sound in her judgments. And I would also add my conviction, after examining the theological systems of other Churches and Communions, that the Church of England stands on stronger, more consistent, and more tenable grounds of argument, than any other in the world; that it is as reasonable and as consistent as Christianity itself; and that, for myself, I am as satisfied of the truth of the religious system of the Church of England, on the whole, as I am of the truth of Revelation.

And when we come to compare the actual influence exercised by the Church of England on the personal religion of its members, with that of other systems, I think we

shall find that a more healthy tone exists amongst us, than elsewhere; I mean wherever our system is tolerably carried out. I would not exchange the toil-worn priest of the English Church, oppressed as he is with many cares; labouring often, it may be, unaided and uncheered, except by his own conscience; dispensing alms from his scanty store beyond his power; training up a family in the ways of God, for whose future support he relies on that God; toiling in season and out of season, with tears and prayers, to waken up the spirit of religion in hard and worldly hearts; with honest zeal to maintain the Truth against those who invade the fold of Jesus Christ, and to rescue His sheep from the fangs of the destroyer; —I would not exchange such a man, for the most pious monk that ever spent his days in fasting, and his nights in self-applied torture. I would not exchange the religious, humble, poor man of the English Church, who labours for his daily bread in patience and trustfulness, and attends duly and reverently in his parish church, and is found each month at the table of his Lord; and who, in sickness, exhibits a pious resignation, and submission, and faith, which affect and edify the beholder; for the devotee of another communion, with all his good and evil deeds, of pilgrimages, and penances, gaining of indulgences, auricular confessions, prayers in churches, and worship of the Virgin and St. Joseph, or even the *heart* of Jesus. I would not exchange the youthful servant of God, untainted by the ways of sin, and fading away in meek remembrance of those blessed Truths which she has learnt from God's holy word beneath the Church's care; I would not exchange the active, and self-denying, and generous-hearted piety, the large benevolence, and the pure religion of many of our higher classes,—for all the devotion of the Church of Rome, however refined, and highly-strained it may be; for the wounds of an Addolo-

rata, or the raptures of a Theresa: because the one is the pure and simple piety of God's word, and of primitive Christianity, and the other is sullied throughout by superstition and idolatry.

The Church of England has but one great need;—she only requires “justice.” Let her system be only allowed to act, and to expand itself in freedom; let her be treated with the same justice which other religious communions experience, and nothing more is requisite for her. She is fully adequate to all the work that is before her; but she cannot perform that work in bondage, as well as she could do if somewhat more free to promote God's cause.

With reference to the question of the Royal Supremacy, which has been of late brought under discussion, I would here venture to offer a few remarks. There can be no doubt that our judicious and able divines, the doctors of the Reformation, the Theologians of the times of the Stuarts, and generally, the mass of our writers, have very earnestly, learnedly, and rightly, defended the high though limited prerogatives of the Crown of England in all “causes,” and “things,” and over “all persons,” within this “Realm” and all its dependencies. The Acts of Supremacy in the time of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, the Articles of the Church of England, the Canons of 1603, all concur in establishing the principle, taught alike by Statute and Common Law, and by the declarations of the English Church, that the Sovereign of England is supreme in *all causes, and things, and over all persons* within the Empire. I am *compelled* then, by the Law of the land, and by the Canons of the Church, to hold that this great and supreme jurisdiction and authority extends to the whole nation, to every member of it, to every cause, concern, thing, or transaction occurring within her Majesty's dominions. I am not at liberty,

consistently with that Law, and those Canons, to affirm that *any class* of her Majesty's subjects are *not* subject to her Supremacy; that particular views on religious topics, or particular ecclesiastical arrangements, however authorized, established, or sanctioned by the Law, *exempt* any causes, or any things, or persons, from being subject to her Majesty's Supremacy.

Being obliged, therefore, by my subscriptions, my allegiance, and the Law of the land, to maintain the Royal Supremacy as a power which extends equally to every one of her Majesty's subjects, I trust there can be no impropriety in expressing a desire that it may be exercised with equal justice and moderation towards *all* subjects of the British Crown. Certain classes of persons within her Majesty's dominions are, through the justice and favour of the Crown, and of the Legislature of the Empire, permitted to exercise their religion in comparative freedom, and without any interference, directly or indirectly, in their religious affairs by persons of a different religious persuasion. I would only ask, as a matter of justice and fairness, that the same privileges should be extended to *all* her Majesty's subjects, to such extent as *they themselves* may deem requisite for the security of their own religions, and the discharge of their own consciences.

This principle combines the most inviolable respect for the Supremacy of the Crown, as established by Law, with an assertion of those rights of Civil and Religious Liberty, which every subject of the English Crown has an undeniable right to claim and to seek for.

As I should be an advocate for the extension of religious freedom to those of Her Majesty's subjects who may entertain different opinions on religious questions from those which the Church of England holds, to such an extent as *they* may deem requisite for the protection of

their respective doctrines or tenets; so I would claim for the English Church such an amount of protection, and such revision of the Laws in her behalf, as shall IN HER OWN FREE AND UNBIASSED JUDGMENT, place her faith, and her discipline, in the *same* state of security, and in the possession of the *same* religious privileges and immunities as any other religious denomination in the Empire possesses. On these broad grounds of right I would at once maintain the Supremacy of the Crown, and claim the Liberty of the Church of England. Such *liberty* being, of course, perfectly consistent with the Royal Supremacy.

For the last century the Church of England has had to deplore the principles on which successive governments have acted in appointing her Bishops and dignitaries. The interests of religion have been altogether laid aside; and political, or personal considerations have been the sole guides. This was a most serious breach of trust:—a great and crying injustice to the Church of England; which, in consenting to the assumption of such patronage by the Crown, acted on the persuasion that it would be honestly and conscientiously used, with a due regard to the qualifications of Bishops; and would not be made a mere instrument for bribing political friends or foes, or for gratifying private partialities. And now, through recent changes in the political constitution, the position of the Church, in this respect, is rendered still more disadvantageous; for Dissenters, Romanists, and others, who are strongly hostile to the Church of England and her faith, having been admitted by law to the privilege of sitting in Parliament, and of occupying offices in the State, the appointment of Bishops, and of other dignitaries of the Church of England, is liable to be *influenced* by persons who are hostile to her faith, and who are desirous of her ruin. The same acts of the Legislature which relieved

Dissenters and Romanists from disabilities, gave them the power of directly influencing the Church of England, while the members of the Church of England cannot exercise any influence over *their* religious systems. There is no equality here. We are under their influence in religious matters; they are wholly exempt from ours. They would esteem it an intolerable grievance if the State, or if members of the Church of England, had the power of interfering in any way with the appointment of their bishops and ministers. They would consider it an infringement of religious liberty; and would hold their religion to be endangered if it were attempted. The Church of England, however, is subject to *their* direct interference. This great injustice has been inflicted by the removal of the disabilities of Dissenters and Romanists, without making any provision for the security of the Church of England at the same time. The appointment of our Bishops and dignitaries is liable to be influenced directly or indirectly by our enemies. They can prevent the appointment of zealous, pious, devoted servants of God; they can promote the advancement of secret enemies to our faith, of hypocrites, of heretics, of worldlings, who shall bring contempt and hatred on the Episcopal office, and on the Church of England; they can, by their secret influence, stir up the State to struggle with the Church, and to put forth claims so exorbitant and so unchristian, that the Church is bound in self-defence to protest against them, and yet is, in the eyes of the world, and of her triumphing enemies, compelled, by the iron hand of power, to submit to them.

And while the sectarian enemies of the Church of England are thus invested by law with the power of interfering in her most vital spiritual concerns—for the appointment of her spiritual heads and leaders is a point which vitally concerns her—those opponents of the Church are abso-

lutely protected, as regards their own religions, from any interference on our part !

And again ; the organization of the religious system of Dissenters and of Romanists is exempted by law from any influence of the Church of England. Our consent is not necessary to the extension of their system in any way they please. Romish sees can be founded without the previous assent of the Church of England : but English sees cannot be founded without the previous consent of the Church of Rome. Romanism and Dissent, by their representatives in Parliament, can negative, when they please, the extension of the English Episcopate, or any other measure for the welfare of the Church. They do so without the slightest scruple or shame. They hold together, and, by an obstinate and bitter perseverance, prevent the passing of such measures as the Church of England wishes for ; they are amongst our governors in Church matters ; the exercise of the Royal Supremacy has devolved in part into their hands.

All other denominations of Christians in the Empire have their synods and conventions, their conferences, or their assemblies, for the regulation of their internal affairs, for the enactment of rules adapted to their peculiar circumstances, for the removal of abuses, the correction of errors, the exercise of discipline, the suppression or termination of needless controversies. In those assemblies they can take counsel together for the welfare and advancement of their respective causes. But the Church of England is deprived by arbitrary power of the exercise of a right which she possesses in common with all other Communions—the inalienable right of self-legislation. That right she has never resigned : it has been wrested from her without her consent, and without any enactment of the Legislature. The Crown, for a hundred and thirty years, has unconstitutionally availed itself of a

technicality to extinguish liberties, the attempt to do which, in respect to *temporal* causes, led to the subversion of the throne in the seventeenth century. The suppression of the Legal and Constitutional Assemblies of the Church,—of rights which have existed from ages, long before England was a Monarchy, is as great a violation of religious liberties, as the suppression of Parliament would be a violation of civil liberties.

The result of this most crying act of injustice has been, that every regulation and reform, affecting the discipline and doctrine of the Church of England, must now come before—must *take its origin* in a Parliament of mixed creeds. Romanists and Dissenters are invested with the power of interfering with all our discipline and doctrine; they may introduce whatever measures they please affecting the Church; they may modify and alter such measures as are introduced by others; they may impede such legislation as they think beneficial to the Church; they are constituted governors of the Church of England, and members of the only synod which the Crown permits to deliberate on her affairs!

The same acts of the Legislature which have given religious liberty to Romanists and Dissenters, have reduced us to religious slavery. For it is nothing less than slavery, and of the most ignominious description, that the members of the Church of England should be, in all their religious concerns, liable to the meddling and interference of those who hate their religion and their Church. It has lately been discovered that we are liable to have our Ecclesiastical causes, even causes involving the most important doctrines, tried by a Court the members of which may be Dissenters from the Church of England, Infidels, or Romanists. Nothing can be more monstrous than such a state of the law. The State, which has inflicted this extreme injustice on the Church of England, by its resto-

ration of religious liberties to others, ought, in common justice, to remedy, at once, the wrong which has been inflicted on us; but the influence of our enemies, now admitted to take share in the government of the State, will be exerted to prevent the State from awarding to us that common justice which every petty and insignificant sect in the country enjoys.

To procure the removal of these various grievances there is but one course.—Churchmen must combine, and co-operate, in some such mode as the Church Unions, or, if *they* should fail, in some other way. But they must go forward in the face of day, with open hearts, and without concealment of their purposes and principles. We must know under what colours we are sailing. We must not halt between two opinions in any wise. We must not let our principles be misconstrued. We must feel convinced of the fidelity of those who come forward to lead us. And, if this can be effected, we shall meet with success.

And now to conclude. If it can be proved, in fair argument, that we have taken a superficial, a hasty, or a mistaken view of the policy befitting those who seek the security of the Church of England, I shall be most willing to submit to the judgment of those who are enabled to maintain their position by reason; but mere assertions or intimations that this or that man has his “crotchet,” or his “shibboleth,” will have little weight with him, at least, of whom such assertions are made. I confess that I have advocated *some* “crotchets;”—I have wished that a movement on behalf of the liberties of the Church of England should not be an unpopular, and a strongly “party” movement; I have endeavoured to persuade men to declare openly and boldly their attachment to the English Church, and their repudiation of Romanism; I have urged them not to be prevented

from so doing, by any fear of concealed Romanists. I apprehend that the views and principles from which these "crotchets" have arisen, are not likely to undergo revision, or alteration. I have also advocated the "shibboleth" of the "*Church of England* in all her integrity of doctrine and discipline, as she stands opposed to Romanism, and to all other errors." And in the maintenance of that "shibboleth," I hope, with God's grace, to live and die. Those to whom fidelity to the Church of England is a "crotchet" and a "shibboleth," are, unhappily, too large a class in the present day. They will, however, ere long, find the appropriate termination of their career in another communion.

If in these pages I have said any thing which may be considered inconsistent with friendly and charitable feelings towards any faithful member of the Church of England, I most earnestly disclaim that interpretation. But as St. Paul saith, "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, *fearing them which were of the circumcision*," so I trust, that in following that holy example—in speaking freely, when it seemed that there was a similar want of Christian courage—a fear of men of unsound minds—a disposition to refrain, in deference to their prejudices and their errors, from proclaiming truths most essential to the whole Church,—I may stand pardoned before God and man. And in closing these pages I would only add the expression of high and sincere respect, and of very warm personal regard, for many, from whom a difference of view on a great and vital question of policy and duty has temporarily (I will hope) separated me.

APPENDIX.

I.

EXPLANATIONS—DYING IN THE CHURCH'S COMMUNION.

IN the present age consistency of principles is so much out of fashion, that the man who attempts to prove, that he retains those views which he held in former years, is more likely to be accused of pride, and of a high estimate of his own opinions, than regarded with any degree of confidence. It seems to be assumed by many persons, that stability and unchangeableness of faith is always the result of obstinacy or prejudice; as if it were impossible that Truth should have been originally held on principles which have substantially stood the test of time; and, being based on full inquiry and conviction, have not wavered and altered when different and less cautiously formed principles have broken up, or become extinct. For himself, the writer can say in all sincerity, that few persons can have formed a more humble estimate of the various works which he has published than himself, and that he is very deeply sensible of their defects in all ways. If, in those writings it is possible to discover any words or sentiments inconsistent with absolute fidelity to the doctrines and position of the English Church, as she stands distinguished from all other communions, or which can be in any way supposed to bear such an interpretation, he will most willingly, thankfully, and *ex animo*, retract any and every such word

or sentiment. But as those writings have been referred to in private, and, I apprehend, in public also, as containing principles inconsistent with the statements on the subject of Romanism which were brought forward at Bristol, I may perhaps be excused for referring briefly to the subject.

The second article of the Statement of Principles proposed at Bristol was as follows:—

“That the Roman Church (including the other churches in communion with her) having repudiated communion with all the churches which do not recognize the claims of the Bishop of Rome, and having by formal decrees, and other authoritative acts, and in her popular practice, corrupted the primitive faith and worship of the Holy Catholic Church, and persisted in the said claims and corruptions; communion with the Roman Church, on the part of Churches, and therefore of individuals, of the English Communion, cannot, consistently with the laws of Christ, be restored, until the Roman Church shall have relinquished her pretensions; and sufficient provision shall have been made for the maintenance of Christian truth in all its purity and integrity.”

The following passages have been referred to, as inconsistent with the positions laid down in the above statement.

In the first passage an objection is raised to an opinion which had been stated, that the Roman Churches were a part of the Christian Church; and an answer is briefly given to the objection.

“IX. If the Roman Churches be Churches of Christ, it must be unlawful for any one to separate himself from them, and become a Protestant in France, Germany, &c.

“*Answer.* It is always right to embrace *the truth*; and if, in consequence of maintaining the truth, any one should be unjustly excommunicated, he is not in schism, and may lawfully consort with those who are not themselves involved in schism, and by whom the truth is main-

tained. But he ought not to forsake the communion of his pastors and his brethren, *unless it should appear evidently that they obstinately inculcate idolatry or heresy.*"

On this passage it may be observed, that the exception at the end leaves *practically* a liberty of secession from Rome on the ground of heresy and idolatry. And the same principle is further stated in the answer to the succeeding objection, in which, while openly aggressive movements are not approved, it is held lawful to provide for the worship of our own people in foreign lands,—“Nor should we refuse communion to any *who have been unjustly excommunicated*, or be unwilling to supply their spiritual wants; or *condemn those who have separated from the communion of heretics or idolaters, or of those who are probably such*.”⁸

The next passage referred to, is as follows :

“XI. If the Roman be true Churches, and if (as you allege) it is not necessary to institute an examination into particular doctrines, but we are to be guided in a great measure by the Church; it follows, that if an Englishman were resident in France or Spain, he ought to join in communion with the Roman Churches there, and, in order to do so, ought to subscribe the creed of Pius IV., in which the invocation of saints, purgatory, the papal supremacy, &c., are included. For, according to you, there is no necessity to examine the truth of these doctrines: they should be received on the authority of the Church.

“*Answer.* The law of unity requires that he should be willing to communicate with those Churches; but he cannot lawfully subscribe or profess the creed of Pius IV., for the following reasons:—(1.) This creed is proposed to him as a *heretic*. It is designed to exact from him the *condemnation* of that branch of the Catholic Church in which he has hitherto lived; and such an ad-

⁸ “Treatise on the Church,” Vol. i. p. 243, ed. 1842.

mission and condemnation cannot be made consistently with truth. Therefore the creed of Pius is to be firmly rejected. (2.) The Roman Church, in exacting from him the profession of this creed, as the condition of communion with her, evidently expects that the particular doctrines therein contained shall be professed explicitly, *after examination*; for otherwise she would have only exacted a *general* adhesion to all the doctrines of the Roman Church. Now it is impossible, consistently with a due regard to Christian Truth, to profess explicitly all points of this creed, especially as matters of faith, because several of them are uncertain and erroneous, and disputed in many parts of the Catholic Church.”—*Treatise on the Church of Christ*, Vol. I. pp. 317, 318, ed. 1838 and 1839.

The expression employed in the above answer, that a person should be “willing to communicate with those churches,” was merely *intended* to imply the desire so to do, *if it could be lawfully and rightfully done*. As, however, this meaning was not sufficiently distinct, I altered the passage in the next edition (1842) in the following manner, as it now stands. The additions are in Italics.

“*Answer. He should certainly desire that the communion between the Church of England and those churches should be restored on such terms as may afford security for the truth; but he could not lawfully, as a member of the Anglo-Catholic Communion, unite himself to another communion by his individual act, when such a union would amount to a renunciation of the Anglo-Catholic Church, and to a virtual approbation of all those abuses and errors which exist in the Roman Communion. He also cannot lawfully subscribe or profess the creed of Pius IV. (which is a necessary preliminary to any such act of union), for the following reasons,*” &c., as above.—*Treatise on the Church*, Vol. I. p. 244, ed. 1842.

It will be sufficient to compare this Answer with the Statement proposed at Bristol, to be satisfied that there is no great inconsistency in *my* supporting the latter.

The author's attention having been directed to a note in his letter to Dr. Wiseman, in which the Church of Rome is not considered, as a whole, to be guilty of idolatry, he has no hesitation in saying that he must admit the Church of Rome to be "idolatrous in some sense;" his former objection to the expression being more technical than substantial. In fine, the author declares his adhesion to the principles laid down in the Bristol resolutions of October 1st, notwithstanding any different sentiments which he may be asserted to have held in former years.

In conclusion, I must say a few words on another subject.—It is very painful to be obliged to differ from eminent men on so important a question as that of the evidences of our sincerity and faithfulness as members of the Church of England. Nevertheless, the question is one of such vital importance that we should not shrink from fairly meeting it. I must therefore say most distinctly, that declarations from any individuals that they intend to "live and die in the Communion of the Church of England," however satisfactory such statements might be in some sense, *do not supply any evidence of fidelity to the Church of England; because they do not afford any kind of security against the inculcation or encouragement of tenets and practices within the Church of England, inconsistent with the faith and discipline of that Church.* And therefore, both as regards the *security* supposed to be afforded by any such pledge, and as regards its effect in *allaying suspicions*, I must say, with regret, that any such pledge or declaration is absolutely valueless, under existing circumstances. Death within the communion

of the Church furnishes no proof of fidelity to the doctrines of the Church.

II.

RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED AT A GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRISTOL CHURCH UNION ON SEPT. 9, 1850.

I.—That an organization of Churchmen for the vindication of the faith and the rights of the Church, more extensive and more united than has hitherto been realized, is absolutely necessary; and that in order to be successful, such an organization requires to be formed upon definite principles, and for definite objects.

II.—That in order to ensure mutual confidence among those who shall co-operate in such an organization, and to inspire confidence in the minds of the great body of Churchmen, Clergy and Laity, it is requisite that a Declaration should be put forth, explanatory of the principles upon which the organization is to be based; that is to say,—unswerving attachment to the Church of England, to her doctrine, and to the essentials of her discipline, as the same have been transmitted from primitive antiquity, restored at the period of the Reformation, and embodied in her formularies of faith and worship;—and that the said Declaration should also contain an explicit repudiation of Romanism, as well as of the principles of mere negative Protestantism, and of the Latitudinarianism of the day. That it is expedient, further, to prepare a statement of the present position of the Church, having regard to the long-continued suppression of her liberties,—to the altered character of the Union between Church and State, in consequence of the altered character

of the State itself,—and setting forth the specific grievances which have arisen out of this state of things. That it is further expedient to prepare a statement of objects, in which prominence shall be given to the following:—

1. The revival of the Synodal action of the Church ;
2. Security for the appointment of orthodox Bishops ;
3. Protection for the Church's Faith from the interference of any authority or influence alien to her principles and constitution ;
4. The removal of all legal impediments to the proper exercise of spiritual discipline in the Church, and to her extension commensurately with the wants of the nation.

III.—That for the attainment of the above and other kindred objects, the following measures be recommended for adoption:—

1. To convene, from time to time, Public Meetings of Churchmen on a large scale ; and in the first instance to make arrangements for the Meeting proposed to be held in February next.

2. To expand the Church Union organization locally and parochially, especially among the middling and lower classes.

3. To establish a cheap, popular Periodical, for diffusing among the middling and lower classes, information in the principles and objects of the organization, and as a record of its proceedings.

4. To establish, under proper central management, a Fund for the promotion of Church objects, and to urge upon all who are desirous of Church emancipation, and especially upon the Laity, the necessity of contributing on a scale of unusual magnitude, in order to collect ample funds in furtherance of the objects of the organization, as having a claim upon the active and liberal support of Churchmen, prior to all other claims whatsoever.

IV.—That the foregoing Resolutions be communicated

to the several Unions ; and that they be invited to send their Chairmen and Secretaries to a Conference of Officers of Unions, to be held in London early in November, and subsequently from time to time, with a request for early information, to be communicated to the Secretaries of the Bristol Union, as to their willingness to co-operate in forming the organization, and in carrying out the objects and measures above proposed.

DECLARATION.

I.—That the English Church, having in the Sixteenth Century reformed herself on the model of primitive Christianity, has a claim upon the undivided and faithful allegiance of the whole English people.

II.—That the Roman Church, (including the other Churches in communion with her), having repudiated communion with all the Churches which do not recognize the claims of the Bishop of Rome, and having by formal decrees and other authoritative acts, and in her popular practice, corrupted the primitive faith and worship of the Holy Catholic Church, reconciliation or intercommunion with the Roman Church, on the part of either Churches or individuals of the English Communion, cannot, until the Roman Church shall have reformed herself, be effected consistently with obedience to the law of Christ.

III.—That the serious dangers to the faith, arising from the abuse of private judgment, and from a mere negative Protestantism, having of late years been greatly aggravated by the insidious introduction of rationalistic notions into the Church, and by the encroachments of a latitudinarian State Policy, it is the duty of all the members of the Church of England to offer to these pernicious principles the most active and uncompromising opposition.

III.

AMENDED RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED AT A SPECIAL
GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRISTOL CHURCH
UNION, OCTOBER 1, 1850.

[It should be explained, that the slight verbal alterations introduced into this amended form were intended for the purpose of avoiding legal difficulties, and of meeting, as far as possible, the expressed wishes of those who were opposed to us. The paper, as amended, was proposed with the consent of the meeting.]

I.—That a more general and active co-operation of Churchmen, for the vindication of the faith and rights of the Church than has hitherto been realized, is absolutely necessary, and that, in order to be successful, such co-operation requires to be based upon definite principles, and directed to definite objects.

II.—That it is requisite that a statement should be put forth, explanatory of the principles upon which such co-operation is to be based, that is to say—unswerving attachment to the Church of England, to her doctrine, and to the essentials of her discipline, as the same have been transmitted from primitive antiquity, re-asserted at the period of the Reformation, and embodied in her formularies of faith and worship; and that the said statement should also contain an explicit repudiation of Romanism, as well as of mere negative Protestantism and Latitudinarianism. That it is expedient further to prepare a statement of the present position of the Church, having regard to the long-continued suppression of her liberties, and to the altered character of the union between Church and State, in consequence of the altered character of the State itself; and setting forth the specific grievances which have arisen out of this state of things. That it is expedient moreover to

prepare a statement of objects, in which prominence shall be given to the following:—

1. The revival of the synodal action of the Church.
2. Security for the appointment of orthodox Bishops.
3. Protection for the Church's faith from the interference of any authority or influence alien to her principles and constitution.
4. The removal of all legal impediments to the proper exercise of spiritual discipline in the Church, and to her extension commensurately with the wants of the nation.

III.—That, for the attainment of the above and other kindred objects, the following measures be recommended for adoption:—

1. To convene from time to time public meetings of Churchmen, on a large scale, and in the first instance to make arrangements for the meeting proposed to be held in February next.
2. To appeal to Churchmen, especially of the middle and poorer classes, to co-operate locally and parochially.
3. To establish a cheap popular periodical, for diffusing among the middle and poorer classes information touching the principles on which the said co-operation is to be based, and the objects to which it is to be directed, and also as a record of proceedings.
4. To establish, under proper management, a Fund for the promotion of Church objects, and to urge upon all who are desirous of promoting Church Emancipation, and especially upon the laity, the necessity of contributing, on a scale of unusual magnitude, in order to collect ample funds in furtherance of the objects proposed, as having a claim upon the active and liberal support of Churchmen prior to all other claims whatsoever.

IV.—That it is desirable to obtain a Conference in London, of Chairmen and Secretaries of Unions, favourable to the above principles and objects, not later than

November next, in such manner as shall be consistent with the provisions of the Statute Law.

V.—That the subjoined statement of principles be recommended as the form of statement referred to in Resolution II, subject to any amendment of the terms that may be agreed on in the Conference proposed in Resolution IV, provided that there be no weakening of its language in reference to the Catholicity of the English Church; to the English Reformation; to Romanism; or to Latitudinarianism.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

I.—That the English branch of the ONE HOLY CATHOLIC and APOSTOLIC CHURCH, which has reformed herself, taking primitive Christianity as her model, has a claim upon the undivided and faithful allegiance of the whole English people.

II.—That the Roman Church (including the other Churches in communion with her) having repudiated communion with all the Churches which do not recognize the claims of the Bishop of Rome, and having by formal decrees and other authoritative acts, and in her popular practice, corrupted the primitive faith and worship of the Holy Catholic Church, and persisted in the said claims and corruptions, communion with the Roman Church, on the part of Churches, and therefore of individuals, of the English Communion, cannot, consistently with the laws of Christ, be restored, until the Roman Church shall have relinquished her pretensions; and sufficient provision shall have been made for the maintenance of Christian truth in all its purity and integrity.

III.—That the serious dangers to the faith, arising from the abuse of private judgment, and from a mere negative

Protestantism, having of late years been greatly aggravated by the insidious propagation of rationalistic notions, and by the encroachments of a latitudinarian State policy, it is the duty of all the Members of the Church of England to offer to these several abuses, errors, and pernicious principles, the most active and uncompromising opposition.

THE END.





